

U3A visit to Northumberland

We were due to meet the coach at 9 o'clock. It was pouring with rain, then we received a message from the driver, one of his mirrors was loose and he would have to get it repaired - an hour's delay. We finally left at about 10.30. By then it had stopped raining, two hours later we arrived at Kedleston Hall, where we had lunch and spent about 2 hours visiting the Hall and walking around the grounds.



Kedleston Hall

We then drove to our hotel in Washington.

The next morning we visited Cragside. This was the first house in the world to be lit using hydroelectric power. Built into a rocky hillside above a forest garden of just under 1,000 acres, it was the country home of armaments manufacturer, Lord Armstrong. We spent the day there, where we saw the original pumps, generators and equipment used. We also walked around the very attractive gardens.



House from the side



View from the Gardens

Beamish Open Air Museum was our destination next day. We were transported back to an earlier era; with houses, shops and transport of the times. There was the chance to go down a coal mine, visit an early farm and enter shops displaying goods that were used before WW2 showing prices at the time.



Old tram in main street



View of the colliery & mine

On the way back we stopped at "The Angel of the North" by Antony Gormley. The structure stands 20 metres (65feet) high with a span of 54 metres (175feet) and weighs 208 tons - Body 108 tons and each "Wing" 50 tons. It cost £800,000.



Angel of the North



Close up of structure

Lindisfarne was the destination next day. We had to have an early start to enable us to beat the tides. The Holy Island of Lindisfarne is a tidal island off the northeast coast of England. It is also known as Holy Island. It constitutes a civil parish in Northumberland. Lindisfarne has a recorded history from the 6th century. It was an important centre of Celtic Christianity. In addition to the castle, the ruined priory and the copy of the Lindisfarne Gospels attracts many visitors

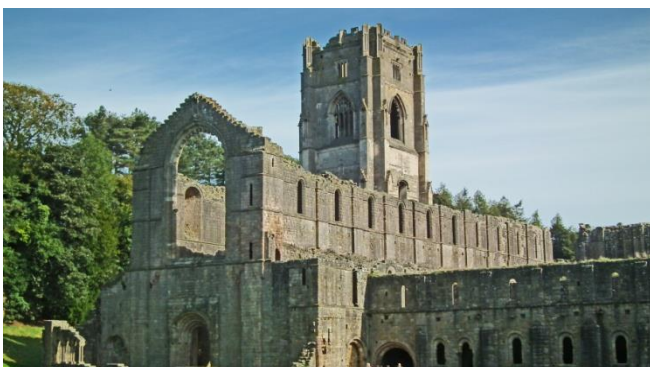


View of castle

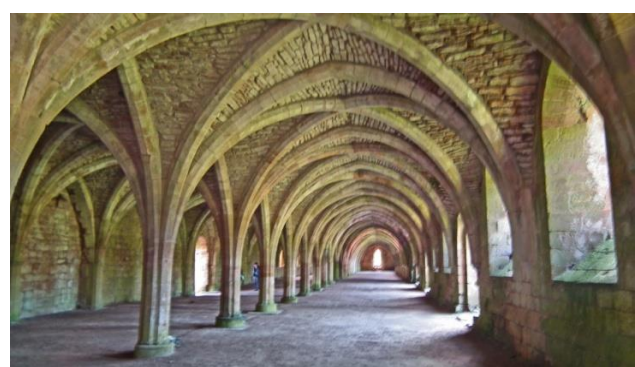


Wooden carving in church

Next morning we left to return home. On the return we stopped at Fountains Abbey, where we had lunch and toured the Abbey, a few energetic ones also managed to visit the Studly Royal water gardens: they said that they were worth the effort .



Fountains Abbey



Cloisters

After leaving Fountains Abbey we had a "Photo Stop" at Banburgh Castle. The Castle was restored by Lord Armstrong, from Craggside. It is one of the finest castles in the United Kingdom



Entrance to Castle



View from Car Park

On the first evening we had a Quiz organised by the tour Guide Emma. The second evening we had an entertainer supplied by the company that organised the tour followed by Bingo, where the caller was Andy Gordon. Also one morning Jeremy Corbyn was at breakfast in the Hotel .

I should like to congratulate Joy Saville for organising such a successful event, the hotel was very comfortable, with a swimming pool used by a number of people, the food was of a good quality, and everyone enjoyed a few sunny days away in Northumberland.



Group Photograph